



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

March, 2010



Final Environmental Impact Statement

Bozeman Municipal Watershed

Bozeman Ranger District
Gallatin National Forest
Gallatin County, MT.



Mystic Lake circa 1880



Mystic Lake circa 1980

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Bozeman Municipal Watershed Project
Final Environmental Impact Statement
Gallatin County, Montana**

Lead Agency:

USDA Forest Service

Responsible Official:

**Mary Erickson
10 E. Babcock St.
PO Box 130
Bozeman, MT 59771**

For Information Contact: Lisa Stoeffler

OR

Jim Devitt

**3710 Fallon St., Ste C.
Bozeman, MT 59718
406/522-2520**

**10 E. Babcock St.
Bozeman, MT 59771
406/587-6749**

Abstract: This Final Environmental Impact Statement responds to the desire of the Gallatin National Forest to implement fuel reduction activities in the portion of the National Forest that is the City of Bozeman Municipal Watershed. The impact statement documents the analysis of the proposal to implement these activities and five alternatives to the proposal. The activities proposed for fuel reduction are thinning and partial harvest in mature timber stands, thinning in small diameter timber stands, prescribed burning in these stands following thinning and harvest, and broadcast burning in less dense stands of timber. Alternatives to the Proposed Action are variations on the amounts and location of these activities and variations in harvest methods; tractor harvest, cable harvest, or helicopter harvest. Six alternatives have been analyzed in this document.

SUMMARY

The Gallatin National Forest proposes to implement fuels reduction activities to reduce the potential for severe and extensive wildfire in the Bozeman Creek and Hyalite Creek drainages. The area affected by the proposal includes the City of Bozeman Municipal Watershed. This action is proposed because of the fuel conditions in the drainages which consists of forested stands of generally mature timber. Analyses and fire risk assessments of the area have concluded there is a high risk to the integrity of the watershed should there be severe and extensive wildfire. This would affect the quality of the water for Bozeman's domestic use, it would cause a safety concern for the recreating public and firefighters, and a wildfire started on the National Forest could enter into the wild land, urban interface to the north of the forest boundary.

The Forest Service has worked with the City of Bozeman and other interest groups to develop the issues and alternatives for this Final Environmental Impact Statement. The six alternatives address the significant issues by varying the types of fuel reduction treatments and the amount of acreage treated. These activities include partial thinning in mature stands, thinning of excess standing fuels in small diameter regenerated timber, and broadcast burning in less dense forest. Each of these alternatives accomplishes the purpose of the project in different ways and each has differing effects on resources such as water quality, scenic quality, fisheries and soils.

Chapter 1 of this document discusses the purpose and need for the project and gives a more detailed discussion of the background. Chapter 2 describes the alternatives in detail and gives a summary comparison of the alternatives. Chapter 3 is where you will find the analysis and disclosure of effects for all the issues.

A separate summary document accompanies the FEIS and is available for review.